currently under implementation throughout the country as a centrally sponsored scheme with the following components;

- Reducing the spread of HIV in groups at high risk by identification of target populations and providing peer counselling, condom promotion, and treatment of sexually transmitted infections.
- Preventive intervention for the general population by Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and awareness campaign, provision of voluntary testing and counselling, safe blood transfusion services and prevention of occupational exposure.
- Providing financial assistance for opportunistic infections, home and community based care.
- Strengthening effectiveness and technical, managerial, financial sustainability at National, State and Municipal levels.
- Promoting collaboration amongst public, private and Voluntary sector.

(e) States have been urged to monitor the effective implementation of the programme components in order to combat the spread of AIDS.

Shortage of qualified physicians

†4095. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a shortage of qualified physicians in the country, keeping in view the requirement of medical care;

(b) if so, the total number of physicians in the country;

(c) the required number of physicians in the country keeping in view the requirement of medical care; and

(d) Government's plan to meet the shortage of physicians?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) As per information available with the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Government a total of 5,56,463 Allopathic doctors have been registered with the Medical Council of India. Besides, there are around six lakh Indian systems of Medicine and Homoeopathic doctors registered with their respective Councils. The norms for availability of doctors to the population in the country, has been recommended to be as 1:2000 by the Bhore Committee. As per the statistics worked out by the Medical Council of India the availability of Allopathic doctors is at present in the ratio of 1:1800. If the practitioners of Indian Systems of Medicines and Homoeopathy are also taken into account the ratio of availability of doctors to the population will work out much favourably. Though there is no shortage in the aggregate number of doctors produced, there is an imbalance in the availability of doctors between different regions in the country.

Plague cases in the country

†4096. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:
SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cases of plague have been detected in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures Government have taken for checking plague?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) After receiving information from 'Health Secretary', Government of Himachal Pradesh regarding admission of a few cases presenting with fever and haemoptysis (blood in sputum) in two hospitals of Shimla District and Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh, a team of experts from National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD), Delhi consisting of Epidemiologist, Microbiologist and Entomologist was deputed immediately to visit the affected areas of Shimla district from 14th to 17th February, 2002 for investigating the outbreak and to provide technical guidance to the State Government for containing the outbreak. Another team consisting of six public health experts was sent to Chandigarh on 22.2.2002. After the visit, the teams submitted their report, which confirmed the outbreak of febrile

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